

**Remarks by the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the U.S. Embassy,**

**Mrs Sandra Clark - Peace Corps Swearing-in**

**Friday, May 06, 2016**

I am delighted to welcome all of you to this ceremony. It is a privilege for me to swear into service the 66<sup>1</sup> Community Economic Development and Health trainees gathered here today.

I am delighted to see you, the 2016 class, today and am proud of your accomplishments over the past 2½ months of training. In joining one of the largest and most renowned Peace Corps programs in the world, you will have the chance to contribute to sustainable development efforts and to continue Peace Corps' second half-century of work in Senegal.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the staff at Peace Corps' Thiès Training Center who played an essential role in helping you to become prepared for your assignments. I also thank in advance all the officials here today, whose organizations and offices will help host you and support your work.

Peace Corps embodies the best of America: Service to others in the pursuit of peace and development.

You will do important work, both individually in your communities, and as teams, as your fellow Volunteers have done. The Health Volunteers who served before you have done tremendous work in helping to prevent and treat malaria, to improve health and nutrition for children, and to adopt health water and sanitation practices.

The Community Economic Development Volunteers have made significant contributions towards enhancing entrepreneurial skills and income generating activities -- increasing productivity and income for women and youth.

The Peace Corps program in Senegal has a long and rich history. It is a true partnership between the peoples and governments of Senegal and the United States. Since the arrival of the first group in 1963, over 3,700 Peace Corps Volunteers have completed their service in this fine country. This year, you become part of a proud tradition of making the world a better place.

I had the privilege of joining the Volunteers and others in November 2013 in celebrating 50 years of the Peace Corps in Senegal and dancing with them to the

sounds of Baaba Maal, Ngaari Laaw, Alibeta and Nomads. My husband and I have welcomed many Volunteers to our home and have been uniformly impressed by their adaptability, enthusiasm, and patience. We love hearing the stories about life in the village, so different from our experience in Dakar.

Many former Volunteers have gone on to become business leaders, members of Congress, educators, development workers and diplomats. Clearly, the Peace Corps program has equally benefited both countries.

As you prepare to begin your assignments, I congratulate each of you on your successful completion of training and wish you well, as you integrate into your communities. In many ways, you will be ambassadors in your respective communities. And so, on behalf of the United States government, I thank you for your commitment, and I wish you all the best for your service to come.

Now, please rise and repeat after me as I administer the oath of service:

I (state your name), do solemnly swear (or affirm)

That I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, domestic or foreign,

That I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion,

And that I will well and faithfully discharge my duties in the Peace Corps,

So help me God.

Congratulations! You are now Peace Corps Volunteers!

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